

Executive Summary

Purpose

The Shandon Community Plan establishes a vision for the future of Shandon that will guide land use, transportation and development over the next 25 years. The vision described in this Plan reflects the desires and opinions of people in and around Shandon. This Plan contains policies, programs, standards and guidelines to help achieve that vision and implement the goals and principles of the County General Plan.

Setting

The unincorporated community of Shandon is located about 18 miles east of Paso Robles in the northeasterly portion of San Luis Obispo County. Shandon is located just south of State Route 46 (SR 46), a regional east-west highway that links Highway 101 to Interstate 5. The community lies at the confluence of Cholame Creek and San Juan Creek where they form the Estrella River. Shandon is set against the Temblor Range to the east and the Cholame Hills to the north. It is surrounded by agricultural lands, including vineyards, row crops, and dry-farmed grain fields. Enhancing the town's picturesque setting are its landmark trees and charming community park near the center of town.



Shandon

Shandon is a small, rural farming community that in 2012 was home to about 1,200 residents. Since the original settlement in 1890, Shandon has grown to be a focal point for surrounding farms and a social service center for people in the area, with predominantly agricultural and service businesses for local people. Shandon has an elementary school and a high school, a fire station, a post office, a library, and churches, as well as a few commercial uses.

Vision

Small-scale, attractive lodging and highway-related services greet visitors and residents as they turn off Highway 46 and make their way into the town of Shandon along Centre Street, the "Main Street" of the community. A dense canopy of shade trees lines Centre Street and surrounding streets. This encourages walking and shopping within an active and vital downtown commercial corridor. Centre Street defines this corridor, which features a community park; schools; a post office; a library; churches; and a variety of shops, restaurants and other businesses to serve the community. Most residential neighborhoods are within one-half mile of Centre Street. This, together with parkways, shaded streets and a network of sidewalks and paths, creates a pedestrian-friendly community.

From 2011 to 2035, Shandon grows into a more complete community in terms of the variety and mix of land uses. However, it maintains a compact form and is developed in a manner that respects and retains its unique small-town character. Shandon offers a balanced mix of land uses including housing, commercial and services for residents, who no longer have to travel out

of town for most services. A variety of housing types and densities offers opportunities for housing that is enjoyed by people of different income levels. This includes housing that is affordable to those who work in Shandon.

Shandon is home to a variety of businesses. They provide opportunities for residents to work in the community in agriculturally-related services, emerging technology fields such as solar energy and other “green” businesses, small “start-up” businesses, and retail trades. New visitor-serving uses help attract more business and activity, but are balanced with businesses that serve community needs. Together, these businesses and services create job opportunities, help create a vital, local economy, and improve the lives of the residents of Shandon.

The community of Shandon prides itself in conserving energy and natural resources through sustainable and environmentally conscious programs and building practices. Through design and development, homes with southern exposures are enhanced with photovoltaic panels and oriented to obtain maximum solar exposure to increase energy efficiency. Homes, offices, and retail stores use high efficiency fixtures. Buildings operate at the highest industry standards, creating a high performance, comfortable, and memorable work and living atmosphere and quality of life.

Shandon conserves energy and natural resources in many other ways. For example, the town encourages new “green” and clean industry and businesses. It takes pride in planting a dense, extensive and beautiful canopy of shade trees that reduce temperatures and energy consumption and make summer days more comfortable. It employs the most effective measures to conserve water. The new sewer system has been designed to maximize groundwater replenishment. Another of Shandon’s important resources is its creeks and river and their associated vegetation that is habitat for plants and animals. Shandon places a high priority on protecting those creeks for their biological and aesthetic value, and for their role in maintaining a healthy watershed.

Community Plan Goals

The following are the primary goals of this Community Plan. Members of the community helped shape these goals through the public process of preparing this Plan, and the goals are intended to generally reflect the desires of the community.

- Establish a framework for orderly growth and development that is consistent with the goals and policies of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan, including the principles for Strategic Growth.
- Promote orderly growth in harmony with the existing town, and revitalize the existing downtown in conjunction with other commercial opportunities in appropriate locations.
- Provide for a variety of housing types and densities, including housing that is affordable to those who work in Shandon.
- Plan for population growth consistent with the community’s vision. Support the services and features desired by the community members, for example, a gas station, medical facilities, a larger market, drug store, restaurant/café, a variety of retail and service businesses, and other priorities identified by the community.
- Plan for growth through a mix of land uses that support the construction and financing of a community sewage disposal facility and other necessary infrastructure to accommodate the needs of the existing town and future development.
- Plan for a comprehensive circulation system consisting of a network of roadways, bikeways, pedestrian, and multi-use trails. Facilitate improvements to existing deficient roadways and

intersections (including highway access) and provide for the construction of new roadways to accommodate anticipated traffic.

- Plan for a balanced community with a variety of land uses, with emphasis on attracting new businesses that provide goods and services purchased locally by residents, and that provide the opportunity to live and work in Shandon.
- Provide for a safe and healthy community that encourages walking, exercise, use of outdoor spaces, and clean industry.
- Employ attractive community design and compact urban form that promotes safety and a sense of place.
- Protect agricultural and environmental resources.

Community Plan Features

This Community Plan is a comprehensive update of the plan for the Shandon Urban Area (and a few areas outside of the Shandon Urban Reserve Line) in the Shandon-Carrizo Area Plan to:

- Determine how much and where Shandon could grow through the year 2037.
- Change land use categories (zones) and combining designations (zoning overlays for sensitive resources, hazards, and other special features) in order to reflect the goals and policies of the Community Plan.
- Assess the potential for development of new business, service and employment opportunities and alternatives in order to foster economic development.
- Identify circulation, infrastructure and utilities needs for the community, including a wastewater treatment facility, and establish policies, phasing and a financing plan to fill those needs.
- Create community design guidelines and development standards that reflect the Community Plan's objectives and address the mitigation measures identified in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
- Establish future action programs to implement the goals and policies of the Community Plan.
- Establish criteria in the Community Plan for future development on certain large, undeveloped properties following preparation of master plans or specific plans.

Land Use, Population and Buildout

The Land Use Plan in Chapter 3 shows the Urban Reserve Line or URL--the 25-year growth boundary--and generalized land uses. This Plan provides for land uses that could allow the community's population to increase from approximately 1,200 residents in 2011 to a maximum of approximately 5,260 residents. This is the community's "buildout" population.

Buildout: Buildout is an estimate of the ultimate level of development (e.g., number of dwelling units and square-footage of commercial development) and accompanying population that can be expected according to the land uses envisioned by this Plan, including any special limitations on density or intensity of development. The estimated buildout may not actually be achieved due to such factors as physical or environmental development constraints on certain properties and market demand.

A mix of residential land uses is planned. These include Residential Suburban properties having one dwelling unit on one to five acres, Residential Single Family areas with mixed densities from two to 12 units per acre (average of 4.2 units per acre), and Residential Multi-Family areas developed at densities of 13 to 20 units per acre. In addition, Mixed Use areas could be developed with a combination of commercial and residential uses.

This Plan identifies land for commercial growth in the community in areas identified as Commercial Retail, Commercial Service and Mixed Use on the Land Use Map. The Plan allows for flexibility in the planned commercial areas by enabling Shandon to grow into its commercial areas as needed. As commercial development occurs, priority should generally be given to development of commercial land within the existing downtown core area along Centre Street before commercial development expands outward from there. However, commercial centers that require larger parking facilities may need to be located outside of the downtown. As the downtown grows, it is important that there is an adequate supply of commercial land so that future businesses do not become disconnected from the town's core.

Together, all of the Commercial land use areas could ultimately provide over 300,000 square feet of space for retail businesses, offices, medical facilities, limited services, and other civic and public assembly uses. The Mixed Use areas could accommodate uses that are similar to those in the Commercial Retail areas, but that are generally not parking lot-dependent. One Mixed Use area includes existing residences near the commercial core. This area may remain residential for an extended time until property owners desire to add businesses to their properties.

Three types of Commercial Service areas are envisioned. Visitor-serving and highway commercial uses are envisioned near the intersection of Highway 46 with East Centre Street at the northeast end of town, and near the Highway 46/West Centre Street/McMillan Canyon Road intersection. Job-generating business or commerce parks and support businesses are envisioned at locations along Centre Street at the west and east ends of town. Those areas could accommodate jobs for up to 300 people. An additional area is identified as a flexible land use area that could develop with residential uses if other Commercial Service land becomes available in the community. In total, the Commercial Service areas could ultimately accommodate over 175,000 square feet of floor area.

The Community Plan also provides for a variety of other land uses. These uses would occur in areas identified as Public Facilities (publicly-owned or operated facilities), Recreation (public parks), Agriculture (land under Land Conservation Act contract and existing agricultural land north of the Estrella River), and Creek Area and Habitat Area (corresponding to the creek and river areas and an area along the community's eastern edge). Among the planned land uses are 18 acres of parkland, in addition to the existing 11-acre community park.

Public Utilities and Services

The Community Plan envisions substantial improvements in public services, primarily water, wastewater and transportation. Additional water storage facilities are needed to provide for adequate emergency and fire protection storage for the existing town, as well as for the demands of planned new development. The existing water storage reservoir in the eastern portion of town will need to be supplemented by a new water storage facility in the same vicinity.

A wastewater treatment facility is needed to accommodate the population resulting from the residential and commercial development envisioned by this Plan. New development is to fund construction of a wastewater collection, treatment and disposal system to serve that development, and provisions should be made to extend sewer service to the existing town. The Land Use Map identifies general alternative locations for the treatment plant.

The community's transportation system will need to be improved to accommodate additional vehicle and pedestrian traffic as the community grows. Examples of needed improvements include improved access to Highway 46, improvements to Centre Street, a pedestrian crossing of San Juan Creek, and realignment of old San Juan Road.

Other utility improvements envisioned with this Plan are a comprehensive storm drainage and groundwater recharge system, low-intensity street lighting, and extension of public utilities throughout the future urban area. The Plan also promotes the use of energy efficiency measures such as "green building," and use of renewable energy such as solar and wind power.

Chapter 8 is a public facilities financing plan. It identifies the tentative costs and specifies financing methods for the major public facilities needed to support the community as it grows: a wastewater treatment plant; improvements to the water system; and circulation improvements at the intersections of East and West Centre Street with Highway 46, improved access across the San Juan Creek, and other improvements.

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